

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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21

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 H-02 INR-07 L-01 PRS-01 SP-02

PM-03 DODE-00 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

/042 W

----- 070022

O 150800Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3680

INFO COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2928

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS VS

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION IN MR-3

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON 15 MAR 75 FROM BIEN HOA RPT TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 166

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJ: MILITARY SITUATION IN MR3

1. THIS MESSAGE IS BASED ON A CONVERSATION WITH THE MR3 CHIEF OF STAFF AT 1000 HOURS MAR 15. WE WERE JOINED FOR PART OF THE DISCUSSION BY THE MR3 COMMANDER.

2. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENT IN MR-3 SINCE OUR MAR 14 REPORTS WAS THE CAPTURE MAR 14 SOUTH OF CHON THANH IN BINH LONG
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PROVINCE OF 6 POW'S WHO IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS FROM THE 3RD BN,

273RD REGT, 341ST NVA DIV - ONE OF THE 3 NORTH VIETNAMESE RE-SERVE DIVISIONS BELIEVED RECENTLY TO HAVE MOVED SOUTH FROM NORTH VIETNAM. ONE OF THE 6 WAS AN ASPIRANT WHO HAS DECLARED THAT 2 BNS OF THE 273RD WERE SENT TO QUANG DUC AND ON TO BINH LONG. HE HAS SAID THAT HIS DIVISION HAS NOT OTHERWISE BEEN DEPLOYED IN EITHER OF THESE PROVINCES - ONLY THE BATTALIONS AND ONLY TO REPLACE OTHER UNITS. HIS BN, HE SAID, WAS SENT TO CHON THANH TO FILL IN BEHIND A UNIT OF THE 9TH NVA DIV DEPLOYED ELSEWHERE. MR3 REGARDS THIS ACCOUNT AS PRELIMINARY AND NOT NECESSAIRLY RELIABLE AT THIS STAGE. THE 6 POS'S WERE TAKEN IN AN ENGAGEMENT WITH GVN RANGERS IN WHICH THE NVA ALSO HAD 19 KIA. THE RANGERS DESCRIBED THESE TROOPS AS YOUNG, GREEN, AND NOT VERY EFFECTIVE.

3. ON OTHER MATTERS, ROUTE 22 IN TAY NINH REMAINED OPEN THE MORNING OF MAR 15. SUPPLY CONVOYS WERE SENT OVER THE ROAD THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT MAR 14-15. MR3 HAS INTELLIGENCE INDICATIONS THAT NVA FORCES ATTACKING IN EASTERN TAY NINH ARE SHORT OF ARTILLERY AMMO AND THAT PRESSURE IN THAT AREA FOR A DAY OR 2 MAY BE LIGHTER PENDING NVA RESUPPLY.

4. GO DAU HA, SITE OF THE MR3 ADVANCE CP AND HQ FOR THE 3RD ARMORED BRIGADE DURING THIS CAMPAIGN, HAS BEEN TAKING INCREASINGLY HEAVY ABF'S INCLUDING ARTILLERY. HELICOPTERS OF THE DEP MR3 CMDR AND THE 3RD ARMORED CMDR WERE DAMAGED THERE BY ABF MAR 15 MORNING. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MR3 WILL DOWNGRADE ITS PRESENCE IN GO DAU HA FROM ADVANCE CP TO A LIAISON UNIT AND WITHDRAW MOST OF ITS SENIOR STAFF BACK TO BIEN HOA.

PETERS UNQUOTE
LEHMANN

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